



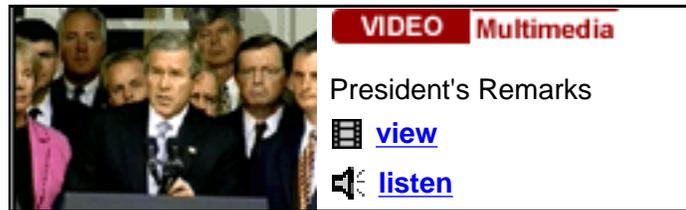
For Immediate Release
Office of the Press Secretary
September 26, 2002

President Bush Discusses Iraq with Congressional Leaders

Remarks by the President on Iraq
The Rose Garden

[A Decade of Deception and Defiance](#)

10:46 A.M. EDT



THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. We've just concluded a really good meeting with both Democrats and Republicans -- members of the United States Congress -- to discuss our national security and discuss how best to keep the peace. The security of our country is the commitment of both political parties and the responsibility of both elected branches of government.

We are engaged in a deliberate and civil and thorough discussion. We are moving toward a strong resolution. And all of us, and many others in Congress, are united in our determination to confront an urgent threat to America. And by passing this resolution we'll send a clear message to the world and to the Iraqi regime: the demands of the U.N. Security Council must be followed. The Iraqi dictator must be disarmed. These requirements will be met, or they will be enforced.

The danger to our country is grave. The danger to our country is growing. The Iraqi regime possesses biological and chemical weapons. The Iraqi regime is building the facilities necessary to make more biological and chemical weapons. And according to the British government, the Iraqi regime could launch a biological or chemical attack in as little as 45 minutes after the order were given.

The regime has long-standing and continuing ties to terrorist organizations. And there are al Qaeda terrorists inside Iraq. The regime is seeking a nuclear bomb, and with fissile material, could build one within a year. Iraq has already used weapons of mass death against -- against other countries and against her own citizens. The Iraqi regime practices the rape of women as a method of intimidation; and the torture of dissenters and their children.

For more than a decade, the regime has answered Security Council resolutions with defiance, bad faith and deception. We know that the Iraqi regime is led by a dangerous and brutal man. We know he's actively seeking the destructive technologies to match his hatred. We know he must be stopped. The dangers we face will only worsen from month to month and from year to year. To ignore these threats is to encourage them. And when they have fully materialized it may be too late to protect ourselves and our friends and our allies. By then the Iraqi dictator would have the means to terrorize

and dominate the region. Each passing day could be the one on which the Iraqi regime gives anthrax or VX -- nerve gas -- or some day a nuclear weapon to a terrorist ally. We refuse to live in this future of fear. Democrats and Republicans refuse to live in a future of fear. We're determined to build a future of security. All of us long for peace, peace for ourselves, peace for the world.

Members here this morning are committed to American leadership for the good of all nations. I appreciate their spirit. I appreciate their love for country. The resolution we are producing will be an instrument of that leadership. I appreciate the spirit in which members of Congress are considering this vital issue. Congress will have an important debate, a meaningful debate, an historic debate. It will be conducted with all civility. It will be conducted in a manner that will make Americans proud, and Americans to understand the threats to our future. We're making progress, we're near an agreement. And soon, we will speak with one voice.

Thank you all for being here. God bless America.

END 10:51 A.M. EDT

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